NEW AVENGERS

ALL-NEW MARVEL NOW!

HICKMAN
SCHITI
MARTIN

018

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS

AS A RESULT OF THE TERRIGEN BOMB, YOUR POWERS ARE GREATLY REDUCED. I WOULDN'T SAY BLACK BOLT IS HALF THE MAN HE WAS, BUT...

...WE'LL HAVE TO HIDE THIS.

T'CHALLA, WAKANDA CANNOT WIN A WAR WITH ATLANTIS.

NAMOR, YOU'RE WRONG.

AND MEN CALL *ME* ARROGANT. TELL YOUR SISTER, THE QUEEN, I WILL OFFER FAVORABLE TERMS. I ASK ONLY FOR THE CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES.

SHE WILL REFUSE.

THEN SHE IS A FOOL.

SO YOU ARE SELLING YOUR SOUL, STEPHEN?

IF I AM TO BE DAMNED, LET IT BE USING ALL THE RESOURCES AT THE DISPOSAL OF A SORCERER SUPREME.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR SOUL DO YOU SELL THIS DAY?

ALL OF IT.

YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL GUILTY, BRUCE. YOUR SOCIOPATHIC OTHER-DIMENSIONAL COUNTERPART WAS A KILLER...

WE'RE PLAYING FOR EVERYTHING. WELCOME TO THE CLUB.

ON AN ALTERNATE EARTH AN EVENT OCCURRED THAT CAUSED THE EARLY DEATH OF A UNIVERSE. THIS CAUSED A TINY CONTRACTION, SMASHING TWO UNIVERSES TOGETHER AT THE INCURSION POINT OF THE INITIAL EVENT, EARTH.

AFTER AN INCURSION, EITHER BOTH EARTHS ARE DESTROYED OR ONE IS SACRIFICED, SPARING BOTH UNIVERSES.

BLACK SWAN, YOU CAME FROM ANOTHER WORLD WITH A DEVICE, THEN DESTROYED THAT PLANET.

WHAT YOU *NEED* IS A *MIRROR* TO OBSERVE ANY NUMBER OF INEVITABLE ADVERSARIES.

WHAT YOU CALL A MIRROR, I CALL A BRIDGE. I CAN BUILD IT. I'VE ACTUALLY BUILT ONE BEFORE.

YOU UNDERSTAND. IF YOU USE THE MIRROR AND FOCUS YOUR NEEDS YOU CAN OBSERVE OTHER INCURSIONS AS THEY ARE OCCURRING.

"ARE WE LOOKING AT A PAST EVENT?"

"NO. WE'RE LOOKING AT THE FUTURE. *TWO HOURS FROM NOW.*"

CO

“INTO THE BREACH”

WRITER: JONATHAN HICKMAN

ARTIST: VALERIO SCHITI

COLOR ARTIST: FRANK MARTIN
LETTERER: VC’s JOE CARAMAGNA
COVER ART: DUSTIN WEAVER & JASON KEITH
VARIANT COVER ART: CHRISTIAN WARD

ASSISTANT EDITOR: JAKE THOMAS
EDITORS: TOM BREVOORT with WIL MOSS
EDITOR IN CHIEF: AXEL ALONSO
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA
PUBLISHER: DAN BUCKLEY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE

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THE ILLUMINATI

BLACK BOLT
Celestial Messiah

NAMOR
Imperius Rex

REED RICHARDS
Universal Builder

IRON MAN
Master of Machines

BEAST
Mutant Genius

DOCTOR STRANGE
Sorcerer Supreme

BLACK PANTHER
King of the Dead

HULK/BRUCE BANNER
Strongest There Is

BLACK SWAN
Incursion Survivor

MAXIMUS
Inhuman Madman

BOUNDLESS

DR. SPECTRUM

SUN GOD

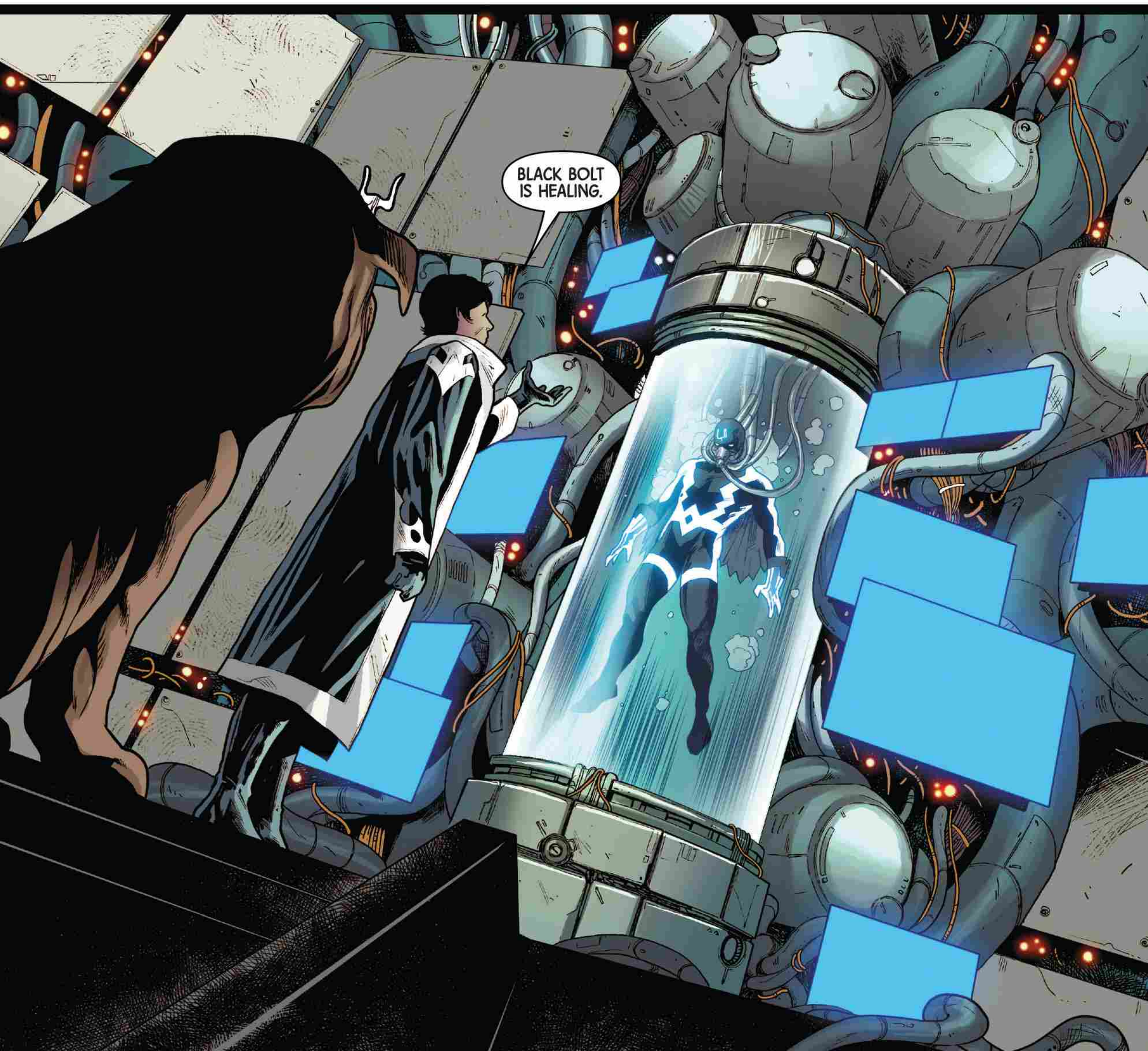
THE RIDER

THE JOVIAN

THE NORN

WOOF!

YES... YOU'RE RIGHT, LOCKJAW. INDEED YOU ARE.
HE *IS* GETTING STRONGER...


BLACK BOLT IS HEALING.

RIGHT NOW, EVEN AS WE WATCH, SCARRED AND DAMAGED TISSUE IS BEING REGENERATED IN THOSE EXOGENETICALLY CHARGED WATERS.

WOOF!

YES, OF COURSE IT HURTS--RAPID HEALING ALWAYS HAS A COST...NOT THAT OUR KING HASN'T ALWAYS BEEN SOMETHING OF A MASOCHIST.

MY BROTHER, YOU SEE--THE CELESTIAL MESSIAH--HUNG HIMSELF ON THE CROSS SO THAT OUR PEOPLE MIGHT BE SAVED THROUGH GLOBAL TERRIGENESIS.

AND NOW WE'RE ALL ONE HAPPY UNIVERSAL FAMILY OF INHUMANS.

WELL, WE ARE IF YOU OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT, RIGHT NOW, EVERYONE THINKS WE DIED IN THE FALL OF ATTILAN.

STILL, WE HAVE OUR PLANS... AND NOW WE HAVE A FIT AND FULLY HEALED KING.

ALL HE HAS TO DO IS RETURN VICTORIOUS FROM THE ILLUMINATI'S WAR TO ANSWER THE NIGHTLY PRAYERS OF HIS PEOPLE.

THEY WILL ACCEPT OUR RESURRECTION WITH OPEN ARMS...

FOR WHAT SANE PERSON WANTS TO COMMUNE WITH THE DEAD?

WAKANDA.
THE NECROPOLIS.

IT'S NOT WEAKNESS.

IT'S NOT.

NOR IS IT DOUBT.

I KNOW WHO I AM.

BUT THE VERY IDEA OF KNOWLEDGE IS THAT IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION--IF YOU HAVE ACCUMULATED ENOUGH DATA TO ACCURATELY MAKE A DECISION--THEN YOU CAN SOMEHOW...MANAGE YOUR FATE.

AND MANAGE THE FATE OF YOUR PEOPLE.

SO I THOUGHT KNOWING WHAT WE WERE UP AGAINST WOULD, IN SOME MANNER, MAKE THINGS EASIER...

MOVE ALL THIS--WHAT WE MUST DO--PAST THE HOPE AND LUCK ON WHICH WE HAVE SUSTAINED OURSELVES TO SOMETHING FIRMER.

BUT I HAVE SEEN WHAT IS COMING NEXT...

I FEAR FOR MY SOUL...AND THE FUTURE OF OUR PEOPLE.

SO I SEEK YOUR COUNSEL...

HONORED FATHERS, WARRIORS AND PRIESTS.

BLACK PANTHERS ALL.

YOU CAN SPEAK PLAINLY, T'CHALLA...

THERE IS NO NEED FOR SUCH FORMALITY... OR SUBTLETY.

AFTER ALL, ARE WE NOT NOW ALL ONE?

BUT LOOK IN THOSE EYES, THE BOY KING HAS SEEN SOMETHING THAT'S SHAMED HIM...

HAVE YOU BEEN WEEPING, PRINCE?

PFFAH! WE DEAD SHOULD BE BEYOND RIDICULING THE LIVING.

AND YET HERE I AM...AS I AM, HUNTING BONES LIKE THE REST OF YOU.

TELL US, T'CHALLA...

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

IN THE NEXT HOUR THERE WILL BE ANOTHER INCURSION.

THE WORLD WE WILL FACE IS DEFENDED BY GOOD--POSSIBLY GREAT--MEN AND WOMEN OF SIGNIFICANT POWER.

I HAVE OBSERVED THEM, AND THEY ARE CRAFTY, BEYOND CAPABLE...AND OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY.

I FEAR THAT WE HAVE REACHED THE MOMENT WHERE OUR ONLY RECOURSE MIGHT BE....WELL, BEYOND A TRAGEDY.

A HORROR. A SHAMEFUL, SINFUL HORROR.

SO?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN... *SO?*

I HAVE DONE *MURDER*, AS HAVE WE ALL HERE...BUT I DO NOT KILL INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN.

THERE IS A LINE. SOME HONOR I HOLD IN HIGH REGARD.

ARE YOU A KING?
YES.
HAVE YOU SAT ON THE THRONE?
I HAVE.
THEN YOU HAVE DONE EVIL. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLACE YOURSELF--OR BE PLACED--ABOVE MAN AND NOT ACT AS A GOD.
AND BY "GOD," I MEAN ONE WHO IS BEYOND HUMAN MORALITY. BEYOND THE PRICE THAT MAN'S JUSTICE DEMANDS FOR IMMORAL ACTS.
I WAS A GOOD KING.
MY SON, I WATCHED YOU BEING BORN, AND PAST MY DEATH I WATCHED YOU BECOME KING...
WERE YOU NOT WAKANDA?
I WAS, FATHER.

"THEN YOU KNOW--THE GREAT GOLDEN CITY, GREATER THAN ANY OTHER IN THE WORLD...

"HOW MANY COULD WE HAVE HELPED--HOW MANY COULD WE HAVE SAVED--IF WE CHOSE NOT TO BE HIDDEN... NOT TO BE SET APART?

"MANY TIMES BECAUSE WE DID NOTHING, MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN DIED...

"AND WE DID THIS BECAUSE IT WAS BEST FOR OUR PEOPLE AND WAKANDA."

THAT IS A KING'S MORALITY.

WE HAVE ALL MADE IMPOSSIBLE CHOICES LIKE THE ONES FACING YOU.

BUT WE SHOULDER THEM AS WE SHOULD... IT IS OUR BURDEN.

YOU SOUGHT OUR COUNSEL AND HERE IT IS:

MEASURE ALL THINGS AGAINST THE SURVIVAL OF OUR PEOPLE. AND THAT SURVIVAL ABOVE ALL OTHERS.

WILL THERE BE A COST? YES.

MIGHT THE UNIVERSE BURN? LET IT.

THESE ARE HARD WORDS TO HEAR, BUT YOU MUST HEAR THEM ALL THE SAME.

YOU WILL KILL THEM ALL IF IT MEANS WAKANDA STANDS.

THE GOLDEN CITY MUST NEVER FALL.

I WILL DO...

...WHAT I MUST.

GOOD HUNTING IN THE HEAVENS, WARRIORS.

YOU AS WELL, MY SON.

T'CHALLA... THERE IS ONE LAST THING.

YES, FATHER?

WHY HAVE YOU NOT YET KILLED THE ATLANTEAN?

SKRITCH!

SKRITCH!

SKRITCH!

WELCOME BACK, STEPHEN...

YOU'RE JUST IN TIME.

BZZT

WELL...DON'T *YOU* LOOK LIKE A MAN WHO'S JUST HAD AN EXPERIENCE?

OH...I GET IT.

ANTIMATTER INJECTOR BUILT TO PIERCE THE CORE AND CAUSE A VIRTUALLY INSTANTANEOUS PLANETARY EXPLOSION.

IT REALLY IS SOME FEAT OF ENGINEERING.

MY QUESTION IS...WHY SO MANY?

AND WHY DO YOU SEEM TO BE ARMING ONE?

I CAN GUESS, OF COURSE...BUT I DON'T THINK I'LL LIKE THE ANSWER.

NO ONE DOES, DOCTOR BANNER.

AND FORGIVE MY OUT-OF-CHARACTER BLUNTNESS AS I EXPAND ON THE THEME...

BUT I KNOW ANTHONY DIDN'T BRING YOU IN WITHOUT EXPLAINING THAT THE PROBLEM ISN'T A SINGLE END-TIMES SCENARIO REQUIRING A ONE-TIME SUPER-GENIUS SOLUTION.

IT'S A *VARIATION* OF THAT IMPOSSIBLE PROBLEM AN *INFINITE NUMBER* OF TIMES.

SO...NOT TOO MANY--AND POSSIBLY NOWHERE NEAR ENOUGH...

HANK, I THINK YOU PEOPLE NEED SOME BETTER SOLUTIONS.

LIKE A DROWNING MAN NEEDS AIR. WHY ELSE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE HERE, DOCTOR BANNER?

I NEED TO SEE YOUR HAND, PLEASE.

WHAT IS--

OWW!

IT'S OUR NEWEST VERSION OF OUR TRANSLOCATOR/ INCURSION CLOCK. LETS YOU KNOW WHEN THE END OF THE WORLD IS NIGH, AND GETS YOU THERE QUICK AS CAN BE.

WHY IS IT FLASHING?

THAT...IS THE ANSWER TO YOUR EARLIER QUERY:

WHY IS IT THAT THE GOOD DOCTOR McCOY WAS ARMING A BOMB?

I'VE GOT A PROBLEM.

ACTUALLY, I HAVE *LOTS* OF PROBLEMS. WHAT I MEAN IS, I HAVE A CERTAIN SHORTCOMING:

AN IDEA GETS STUCK IN MY HEAD-- A BUG CRAWLS IN MY EAR--AND IT INFECTS MY THINKING. IT DOESN'T STOP UNTIL IT'S CONSUMED MY ENTIRE MIND.

THIS THING-- *OUR* THING-- IT'S CONSUMED ME.

MY PROBLEM IS, I'M CONFLICTED.

PART OF ME-- THE HEALTHY, WISE, EMOTIONALLY STABLE PART--WANTS TO DO EXACTLY WHAT I'VE PROMISED...

BUT I'VE GOT A BUG IN MY EAR, AND I CAN'T IGNORE WHAT'S SITTING IN FRONT OF ME.

SO, I THINK IT'S COME TO THIS: I'M DONE PLAYING WITH YOU.

AND I WANT ANSWERS.

HAVE YOU ALSO CONSIDERED THAT THE PROBLEM-- THE *REAL* PROBLEM--IS THAT YOU'RE SIMPLY IN DENIAL?

THAT THERE ARE NO OTHER ANSWERS THAN THE ONE HANGING IN THE AIR. THAT THERE IS NO... OTHER SOLUTION.

I'M CONCERNED ABOUT ALL OF YOU MEN WHO CAN'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND THIS-- I'M CONCERNED... ABOUT YOU.

YOU LOOK TERRIBLE, ANTHONY.

...

HERE'S WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT:

WE'RE GOING TO DEAL WITH THIS UPCOMING INCURSION.

THEN I'M GOING TO TALK TO THE OTHERS--DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO CONVINCE THEM WE NEED TO BRING IN SOMEONE WHO CAN DIG AROUND IN YOUR MIND.

BYPASS ALL THE GAMES, ALL THE LIES, AND GET RIGHT TO THE TRUTH.

THE TRUTH? I'VE NEVER LIED TO ANY OF YOU.

EVER HEARD OF LIES OF OMISSION, SWAN?

YES.

THAT'S WHAT ALL THE IGNORANT PEOPLE CALL DISPLAYS OF THEIR IGNORANCE.

TONY.

IT'S TIME. INCURSION'S TWENTY MINUTES OUT.

WE HAVE TO GO.

I'LL BE BACK... AND THEN WE'LL GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT.

WANT TO TELL ME WHAT THAT WAS ABOUT?

A MAN COMING TO THE END OF HIMSELF.

INCURSION.

AND YOU'RE SURE OF WHAT YOU SAW?

YOU'VE WATCHED THE RECORDINGS FROM THE BRIDGE AS WELL...

WE'RE ALL SURE OF WHAT'S WAITING FOR US ON THAT OTHER WORLD...

"WE HAVE SEEN SO MUCH EVIL IN THE COLLAPSING OF WORLDS...BUT NOW WE WILL SEE SOMETHING TRULY WICKED.

"WHAT'S WORSE THAN FACING VILLAINS WITH THE FATE OF YOUR WORLD HANGING IN THE BALANCE?

"FACING HEROES."

FINAL